

# Adult Learning & Development Interview Preparation©



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# DRESS SMART

## Do's and Don'ts: Dress for Interview Success

### Business Professional

#### Business Professional (Conservative)

- Most common dress code in the western world today.
- Consists of, for men, a dark-colored suit, worn with a long-sleeved shirt and tie. For women, a jacket with matching skirt or trousers plus a blouse.
- Appropriate for nearly all formal settings, but commonly worn at job interviews and in business settings.



#### Men

- A conservative two-piece business suit
- A conservative long-sleeved shirt
- Neck ties should be silk with a conservative pattern
- Dark shoes (black lace ups are best)
- Dark socks
- No rings other than wedding band or college ring
- No earrings

## Women

- A conservative suit with a jacket; no dresses
- A conservative shirt/blouse
- No stilettos or high heels; shoes should be polished, competent, no-nonsense pumps
- Conservative hosiery at or near skin color
- Clear or conservative nail polish
- Minimal use of makeup
- No more than one ring on each hand
- One set of earrings only
- No tank tops or clothes that are too short, too sheer, or too low cut

## Both Sexes

- Conservative two-piece business suit (solid dark black, blue or gray is best)
- Well-groomed hair style
- Shower; wear deodorant
- Makeup should be light and natural
- Clean, polished conservative shoes
- Clean, trimmed fingernails
- Minimal cologne or perfume
- No visible body piercing (nose rings, eyebrow rings, etc.); no tacky jewelry
- No gum, candy or cigarettes
- Light briefcase or professional portfolio case
- Empty pockets-no bulges or tinkling coins
- Black belt (belt should always match shoes)
- NO RINGING CELL PHONES (turn your cell phone off or set it on vibrate)

## Cracking the Dress Codes

**CORPORATE:** Suit, shirt and tie mandatory. Closed toe shoes with a low medium heel. Blouse, crisp shirt or a knit sweater or shell under a suit.

**BUSINESS APPROPRIATE:** Shirt mandatory. Tie optional. Jacket mandatory. Suit preferred. A skirt and blouse or sweater set worn with heels or boots; tailored trousers paired with a turtleneck and jacket.

**BUSINESS CASUAL:** Shirt or sweater mandatory. Jacket not required but preferred. Ironed khakis with a classic white shirt; a casual skirt and a sweater set; a cleaned tailored pair of dark jeans with a jacket.



## LAST MINUTE INTERVIEW TIPS

- **Prepare: access your skills, values & interests**
  - **Research: learn about the organization**
  - **Practice: go over what you want to express**

### **Before the Interview:**

- Draw a line down the center of a piece of paper. On the left side, make a list of what the employer is looking for (based on the job posting). On the right side, make a list of the qualities you possess that fit those requirements – *What Do I Bring to the Table?*
- Organize a professional interview portfolio.
- Research the company, the industry, and the competition. Visit the company website and put the company name in a search engine to see what pops up.
- Prepare a brief statement to answer “Tell me about yourself.” Focus on your powerful qualities and accomplishments vs. just listing out your resume.
- Write at least five success stories to answer behavioral questions (such as “Tell me about a time where you dealt with a difficult student/parent”). Focus on what the situation was, what action you took, and what resulted from your action.
- Write out your successful classroom management plans.
- Prepare 10 questions to ask the interviewer about the job, the company, and the industry to take with you to the interview.
- Research salary data and determine your worth.
- Determine your salary needs based on your living expenses – what is your bottom line?
- Get permission from your references to use their names.

### **Before you to to the interview:**

- Do you look professional? Check yourself in the mirror; part of your confidence will come from looking good.
- Bring the following with you to the interview: several copies of your resume on quality resume paper; a copy of your references with complete contact information; addresses and phone numbers of previous employers; a pad of paper from which you can take notes; directions to the interview site and a contact person’s name.
- Review what you would say to the 10 most common interview questions:
  1. Tell me about yourself.
  2. Why did you leave or why are you leaving your present position?
  3. What do you know about this school district/company?

4. What are your career goals?
5. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
6. What do you want to work for this school district/company?
7. What has been your most significant achievement?
8. How would your last supervisor and colleagues describe you?
9. Why should we hire you?
10. What are your salary expectations?

**Upon Arrival:**

- Arrive early – enter the building 10 minutes prior to your interview time.
- Go to the restroom and check your appearance one last time.
- Announce yourself to the receptionist in a professional, courteous manner.
- Stand and greet your interviewer with a hearty – not bone crushing or limp – handshake.
- Smile and look directly into the interviewer’s eyes.

**During the Interview:**

- Try to focus on the points you have prepared without sounding rehearsed or stiff.
- At the conclusion: express your interest for the job; thank the interviewer; and determine the next steps.
- Ask for the interviewer’s business card so that you can send a follow-up letter.

**After the Interview:**

- As soon as possible, write down your thoughts and feelings about the interview.
- Look at your notes and assess how well you did.
- Within 24 hours, write a follow-up thank you letter, reminding the interviewer of your qualities.

# **Interview Questions**

## **Adult Learning & Development Candidates**

What were your reasons for selecting your college or university when deciding where to go

for your education?

What is your supervision style?

How can you help build our community?

What kind of education programming have you done?

What kind of career development workshops have you created?

Could you briefly describe your dissertation?

What interests do you currently have for future research?

In your opinion, what attributes make for the ideal educator?

What do you feel are the contributions you have made to your field of study?

How do you see yourself in the role of university professor?

Have you published any papers or projects?

What is your philosophy of education?

What Student Development theories/theorists do you subscribe to? How do you see them in

action when working with students?

Describe your teaching experiences in higher education. Assess your strengths and areas for improvement.

How do you like to interact with your co-workers?

What kinds of crisis situations have you had to handle?

What would you do if you were supervising the residence hall and this situation happened?

For example, 2 roommates having an argument and becoming disruptive to others.

How would you handle an irate student who is arguing about his tuition bill?

What experience do you have as a judicial officer/policy enforcer?

What experience do you have in advising undergraduate and graduate students?

Have you had past advising experience (student groups, hall government)?

What experience do you have with distance learning?

What administrative experience do you have that would benefit this position?

How do you relate to students from backgrounds different from yourself? What is your view on diversity/multiculturalism?

How have your education and training prepared you for this position?

Who has served as your source of inspiration? In what way has this guided you?

What plan of action do you take when facing a tough problem?

Do you feel you would be able to take issue with your department chair or a member of your department in presenting an opposing point of view?

What do you find most satisfying in academia? Most frustrating?

What was your most important course in college?

What is your style in working with students?

Give an example of a situation in which you worked under a deadline pressure?

Have you had any difficulty getting along with a former professor/ supervisor/ co-worker

and how did you handle it?  
Have you ever spoken before a group of many people? How did it go? How did you prepare for it?  
In what ways do you see yourself contributing to the professional growth and development of the students?  
How do you think you will function working in an environment requiring collaboration with other departments or faculty? Explain.  
How do you see yourself contributing to this department?  
What are you greatest strength?  
What is your greatest weakness?  
What are you short term goals?  
What is your long range objective?

## **Questions for you to ask them**

How is this university/company organized?  
What are the major units and administrators of this school/company and what are their responsibilities?  
What does the organizational flow chart look like?  
What is the relative importance of teaching, research and service for promotion and tenure?  
What is the nature of the tenure process?  
What is the potential career ladder for this position?  
What is the typical number of students for advising?  
What is a typical day like in this position?  
Ask questions about the staff, students, general atmosphere of the office. Ask about policies, your responsibilities if they are not clear.

### **Good closing question to ask:**

When can I expect to hear from you regarding your decision?